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Technical Assistance

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Capacity Building

Through on-going technical assistance, Shelter Partnership works to build the capacity and effectiveness of individual agencies providing short-term and transitional housing for homeless people. We also work with agencies to create permanent affordable housing with supportive services for homeless people.

At the same time, Shelter Partnership provides technical assistance to government agencies and funders in order to give guidance on where there are needs across the community and how to design and support effective programs for homeless persons. Shelter Partnership's work has often led to the creation of new programs.

Shelter Partnership provides the following Technical Assistance:

Funding Alerts: When a source of funding is announced with a call for project proposals and applications, Shelter Partnership issues an alert which describes the available funding and how to apply. Shelter Partnership tracks public and private funding sources daily in order to keep the community informed and on the competitive edge for national, state and local funding.

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA): Shelter Partnership provides critical technical assistance to LAHSA, including the preparation of a collaborative application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



City of Los Angeles Housing Department's (LAHD) Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Program: Shelter Partnership participates with the City and County of Los Angeles in designing how federal funding will be used each year in meeting the needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and has prepared successful applications for federal



LAHD's Housing Trust Fund: Shelter Partnership has successfully advocated for priority funding for affordable housing projects that target special needs households and provide services to meet the tenants' needs.

County of Los Angeles' Community Development Commission (LACDC) City of Industry Program: Shelter Partnership assists the County CDC in designing programs under their City of Industry capital funding program as well as other housing programs.

For more information, please contact [Ruth Schwartz](#).

Current Collaborative Projects

Homeless Older Adults:

This project addresses the needs of homeless older adults in Los Angeles County. One quarter of the 250,000 homeless annually in Los Angeles County are over age 50 and their numbers are increasing.

Homeless older adults are unique because they are more likely than their younger counterparts to have multiple medical problems and chronic illnesses that have gone untreated for years, and illnesses common to aging such as



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diabetes, cardiac disease, circulatory problems, and hypertension. Homelessness compromises health, and can lead to hypothermia, insufficient sleep, and poor nutrition. It is also a predictor of mental illness, such as depression and dementia. Homelessness contributes to memory problems, cognitive impairments, poor judgment and poor comprehension, which causes difficulties delivering services.



In 2006-2007, with the support of the [California Community Foundation](#) and the [Corporation for Supportive Housing](#), Shelter Partnership undertook an exhaustive 18-month planning process with the help of a diverse and expert 26-member Steering Committee. The final product, [Homeless Older Adults Strategic Plan](#) included an exhaustive literature review, data analysis, interviews of housing developers, social services providers and government officials as well as older adults themselves; and case studies of housing for this population.

According to the Strategic Plan, there are 3,000 to 4,000 homeless individuals nightly in Los Angeles County who are 62 years of age or older, and their numbers are growing. **The Housing for Homeless Older Adults Collaborative** entails two interventions to address the two major groups of homeless older adults.

The Securing Affordable Senior Housing Collaborative assists seniors with few social and health care needs who have more recently become homeless, typically because of a major life event such as hospitalization, layoff, or death of a spouse. For this group, as a result of their extremely low incomes, affordable rent is the main impediment to their securing permanent housing. Through a structured, staff intensive process, we are working with the many subsidized senior housing developers in the county to overcome their reluctance and programmatic barriers to providing housing to our population, and concurrently work with agencies serving homeless older adults to identify, assist, and provide follow-up services so that these individuals secure housing and permanency in these buildings.

The challenge in undertaking this initiative is persuading senior housing developers to work with homeless service providers and be willing to make changes to their customary practices, such as accepting alternatives to the documentation that they routinely require, requires extensive and persistent education. Among the most prevalent barriers to accessing these units are lotteries, screening procedures, and wait list management through the U.S. Mail, which effectively excludes homeless adults who lack reliable mailing addresses. Requirements for references from prior landlords, criminal background checks, credit checks, birth certificates, and move-in deposits also screen out homeless applicants.

Our main partner in this collaboration is [Menorah Housing Foundation](#), a major local developer of senior housing and a strong proponent of including homeless older adults in their buildings. Since early 2009, 58 homeless seniors have moved into housing and 74 homeless seniors are on waiting lists to move-in to housing.

The Permanent Supportive Housing Collaboration is aimed at homeless older adults who have experienced long-term homelessness and have extensive, difficult, and challenging health care and social service needs, who are otherwise known as "chronically homeless." In partnership with non-profit special needs developers, we work to ensure that critically needed health and social services are provided in new developments, preferably on-site.



The most difficult challenges involve producing permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless older adults who have been homeless for many years and present with mental health and substance use issues.

We are working with the sponsors to develop partnerships with health care and social services agencies and access funding, including the difficult-to-secure local, state and federal services funding, such as the Assisted Living Waiver Pilot Project (ALWPP); Adult Day Health Care (ADHC); Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC); Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP); In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS); and Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs.

The first development to come on-line will be the Bonnie Brae Village Apartments in the fall of 2009-- a 90-unit senior housing development with half of the units set-aside for homeless older adults. The development is located just west of downtown Los Angeles and the services provider is [PATH Partners](#).

Funding is from the **Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation** and the **Corporation for Supportive Housing**. For more information on these collaborations, e-mail [Steve Renahan](#).

Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Support for Homeless Re-Entry (SHORE): Shelter Partnership was instrumental in the development, organization, and approval of this new program, SHORE. This program makes public transportation available

for those homeless persons who are participating in a transition to stability through case management and supportive services. In 1994, the program was awarded \$615,000 as a 14-month demonstration program through which 30 participating agencies received bus tokens for their clients. Most recently, Shelter Partnership successfully worked for renewal of the program that is now funded at \$350,000 annually with 19 participating agencies.

Housing Element Project:

California state law requires each city and county to adopt a housing element. In its housing element, the local government must plan to meet *the existing and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community, including homeless people and extremely low-income households.*

Thanks to funding from the United Way, Shelter Partnership has embarked on a project to review and provide in-depth comments on local housing elements to the respective city. We have now completed housing element reviews for 12 jurisdictions: Beverly Hills, Burbank, Culver City, Downey, Glendale, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, Santa Clarita, Torrance and Whittier.

Our substantive reviews focus on three areas: 1) the cities' plans to meet the regional housing need allocation, specifically for extremely low-income households; 2) the regulation of housing for people with disabilities, including adoption of a reasonable accommodation procedure; and 3) compliance with SB 2 of 2007, the fair share zoning law ([Click to see Fact Sheet](#)). Many of the cities agree to our recommendations and modify their housing elements accordingly.

Once the housing element is adopted, Shelter Partnership monitors the local government to ensure that it is implementing the programs outlined in the housing element. Shelter Partnership is committed to holding cities accountable to their responsibilities to plan for housing for all members of the community and to remove obstacles to the development of this housing.

For more information, please contact Nicky Viola at nviola@shelterpartnership.org and visit the California Department of Housing and Community Development's website at <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/hrc/plan/he/>.

Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP):

As part of the federal ARRA (stimulus) program, the City of Los Angeles is receiving \$29 million in **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP)** funds over a three-year period (2009-2012). The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) administers HPRP on behalf of the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD). Shelter Partnership advises LAHD and LAHSA and assists with HPRP program design and implementation.

The HPRP program provides temporary housing-related financial assistance and stabilization services to households that currently live in the City, have an annual income that is less than 50% of the area median income and are homeless or about to become homeless. The federal regulations require that the program targets households that would be homeless "but for" HPRP assistance. At the same time, these households should be able to pay rent on their own once the temporary HPRP assistance period is over. [See Shelter Partnership's blog dated March 22, 2010 for a longer description of the HPRP program and some examples of households that have benefited from HPRP assistance.]

Three regional coordinating agencies (RCAs) provide case management services to homeless families and individuals identified for this temporary assistance and help with locating affordable housing. HPRP agencies providing assistance to homeless persons are LA Family Housing, Special Service for Groups and PATH (in partnership with St. Joseph Center and Weingart Center Association). A partnership of legal aid organizations provides legal services, case management and temporary assistance to families and individuals who are about to lose their rental housing in the City. HPRP agencies providing homelessness prevention assistance are the Legal Aid Foundation of LA, Neighborhood Legal Services and Inner City Law Center. The fact sheet below provides contact information for all of these agencies:

<http://www.lahsa.org/docs/hprp/City-of-LA-HPRP-fact-sheet-Updated-7-1-10.pdf>

The City of LA HPRP program officially launched on November 2, 2009 and Shelter Partnership continues to participate in policy meetings and provide technical assistance to the City and participating agencies.

For more information, contact Dhakshike Wickrema at dwickrema@shelterpartnership.org.

Recent Collaborative Efforts

Community Model: Shelter Partnership played a major role - including help in fundraising and siting -- in OPCC's (formerly Ocean Park Community Center)



development of a Safe Haven at 26th Street and Cloverfield Streets in Santa Monica. The Safe Haven utilizes a "Housing First" community model to serve chronically homeless individuals living with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders and has 25 beds.

As part of this effort, funded by [The California Endowment](#), Shelter Partnership also produced *The Community Model* on how to replicate this program and conducted numerous trainings.

For more information, contact [Ruth Schwartz](#) or visit <http://www.communitymodella.org/>.

LA's HOPE: Los Angeles Homeless Opportunity Providing Employment: As part of the national New Freedom Initiative to address chronic homelessness, the City of Los Angeles received five-year funding from the Departments of Labor and Housing and Urban Development for an innovative program that Shelter Partnership played a key role in designing and helping implement: the LA's HOPE program.

LA's HOPE also involved the collaboration of eight public and private agencies: **Los Angeles Community Development Department**, the **Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles**, **Goodwill Southern California, Inc.** (Goodwill), **Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health**, **Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority**, **Portals House, Inc.**, **San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, Inc.** (SFVCMHC), and **South Central Health and Rehabilitation Program** (SCHARP).

The chronically homeless adult participants, all of whom had mental health diagnoses, received extensive mental health and other social services; job training with vocational training, coaching, and employment; and permanent housing at very low rents.

The results from this pilot program were outstanding and are reported at <http://www.urban.org/publications/411631.html>

Connections: Collaborative Project to Provide Permanent Housing for Homeless and Unstably Housed Persons Living with HIV/AIDS.



With Shelter Partnership's extensive program design and grant-writing assistance, and as one of only three jurisdictions in the nation, the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) received \$1.2 million in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) competitive grant funding to implement Connections in the County of Los Angeles, which resulted in permanent housing subsidies for 105 homeless or persons who are at imminent threat of homelessness. The project was a collaborative between the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the United States Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Connections represented an innovative opportunity to study the impact of providing housing for homeless or unstably housed persons on the transmission of HIV and the health of persons living with HIV. Several scholarly papers have been developed on this.

The initial grant was recently renewed to provide an additional 90 homeless and very-low income individuals with permanent housing subsidies.

For more information, please contact [Nicky Viola](#).